

City of Topeka
Municipal Court

Annual Report

For year ended December 31, 2009
Steven R. Ebberts, Administrative Judge
Prepared by Gail Lewis, Court Administrator
214 SE 8th Street
Topeka, KS 66603
www.topeka.org/municipalcourt
785-368-3776

This annual report is being presented to demonstrate how the City of Topeka Municipal Court is utilizing resources to best serve the public.

The Court presides over ordinance parking and traffic violations as well as a wide range of misdemeanor infractions including charges of DUI, drug and drug paraphernalia possession, prostitution, assault, battery and theft cases. However, the Court does not process meter-parking violations.

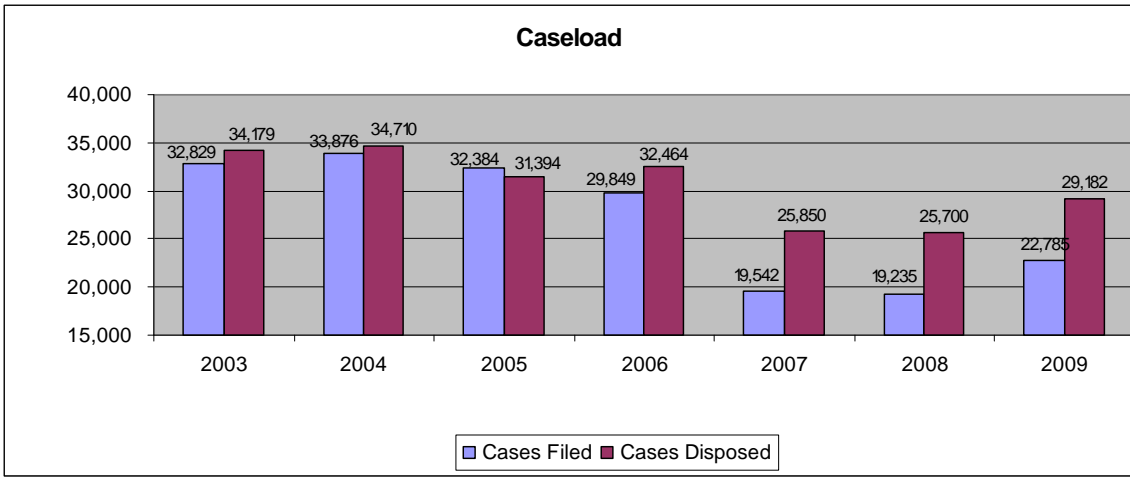
Court staff strives to provide for the fair, prompt adjudication of alleged ordinance violations while maintaining exemplary security and customer service, to be proactive in probation services and to offer quality drug and alcohol education to the citizens of Topeka.

Highlights of our 2009 Accomplishments:

- Completed the court cost overcharge refund process.
- Finalized the contract for the implementation of the FullCourt module that will allow offenders utilizing credit cards to make payments on the City of Topeka Website and the costs of those credit card payments will be passed on to the offenders.
- Conducted clerical staff training in the Clerk's office throughout the year to ensure consistency, competency and accuracy of work methods to improve performance.
- Continued to review and propose effective revisions to ordinances relating to Municipal Court.

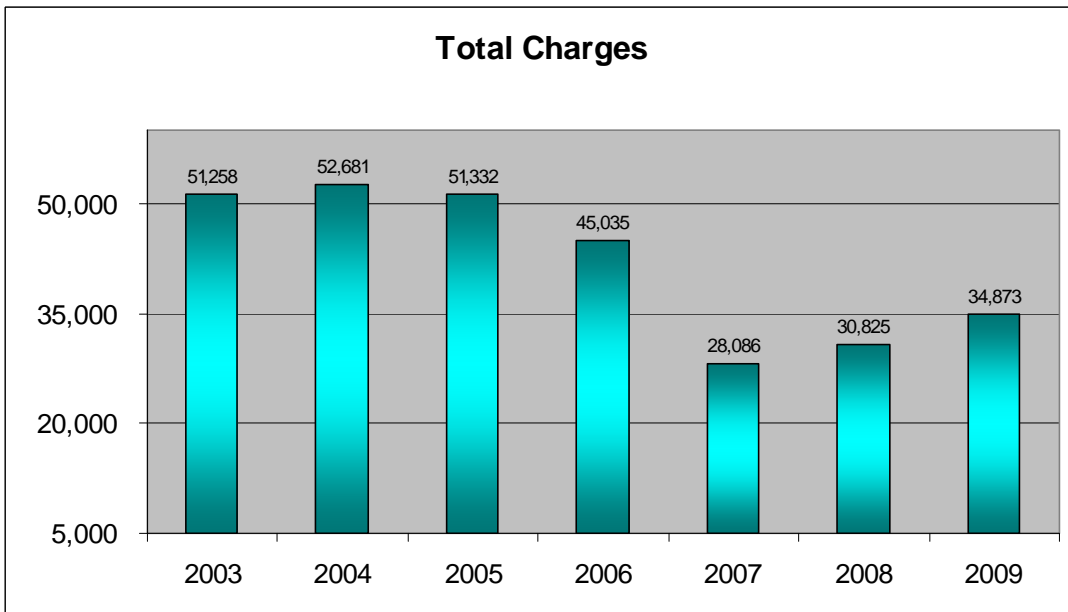
How many cases do we hear?

The graph below illustrates our total caseload over the last seven years; 2009 continued the 2008 trend of an increase in disposed cases over filed cases. 2009 reflects an increase in both cases filed and cases disposed.



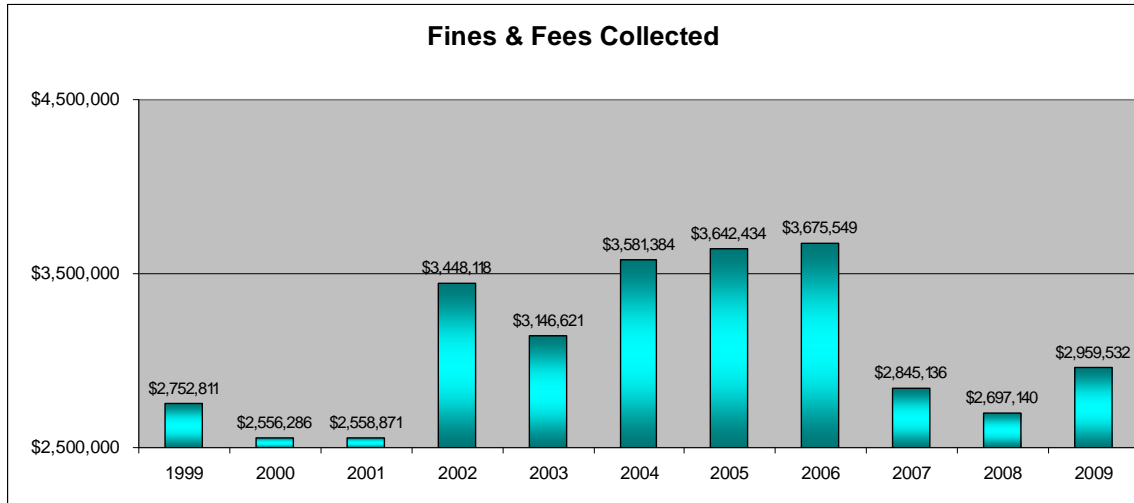
How many charges are there?

While the above graph reflects total *cases* filed and disposed during the last seven years the graph below illustrates the total *charges* filed during the same time period. The reason for the variance between the number of cases filed and the number of charges filed is due to multiple violations listed on a single citation (case) or private complaint (case). Traffic cases typically carry more charges versus misdemeanor cases. Thus, a reduction in traffic cases will reflect a larger decrease in charges filed.



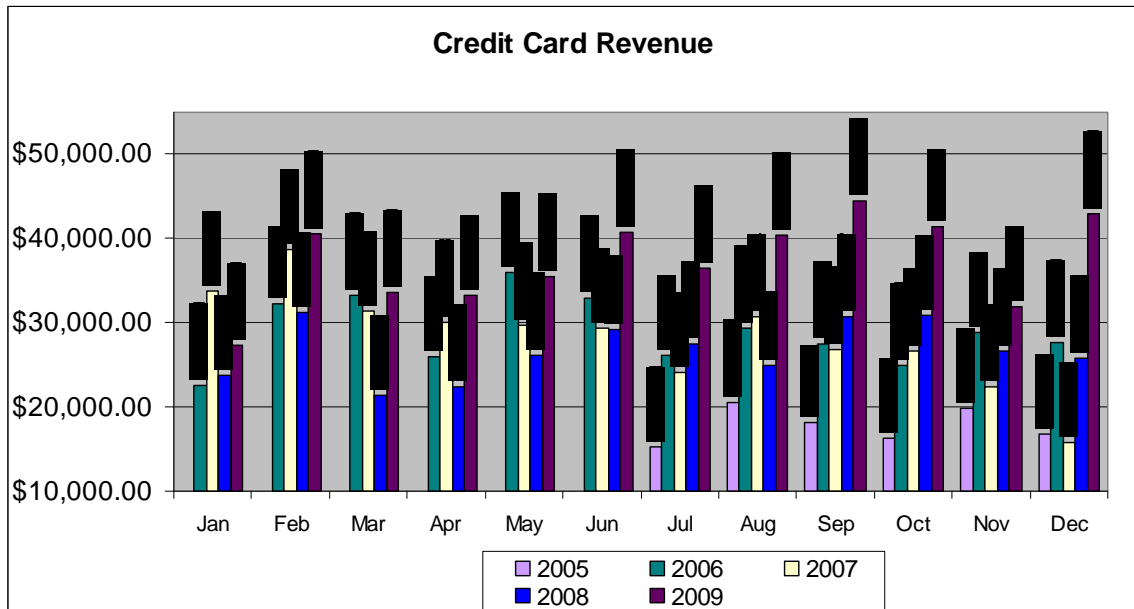
How much was collected in fines & fees?

The Municipal Court Clerk’s Office is responsible for entering all complaints filed in the Court as well as for receipting monies from fine payments, fee payments and bonds and for completing the daily deposit to the finance department. The significant decrease in revenue is almost exclusively related to the reduction in filed traffic cases. The percentage of collection versus filings, however, remains high due to continued focused collection efforts by the Court.



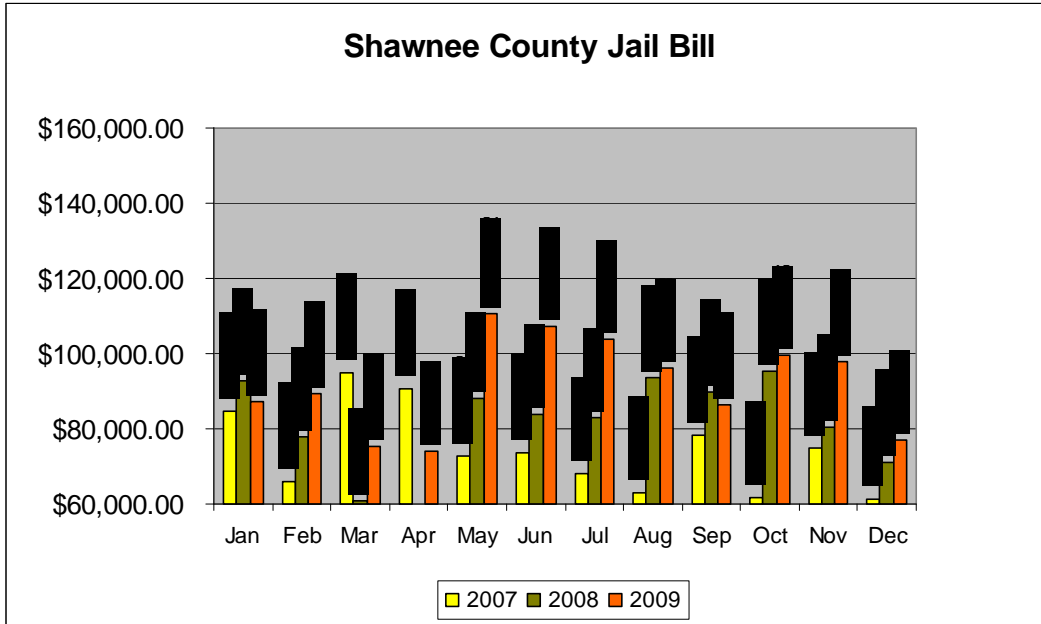
How much was paid by credit card?

The Municipal Court Clerk’s Office began accepting Visa and MasterCard payments in July 2005. In 2009 the Court began accepting Discover Card as well. Despite shrinkage in overall revenue, payments made using a credit card are increasing.



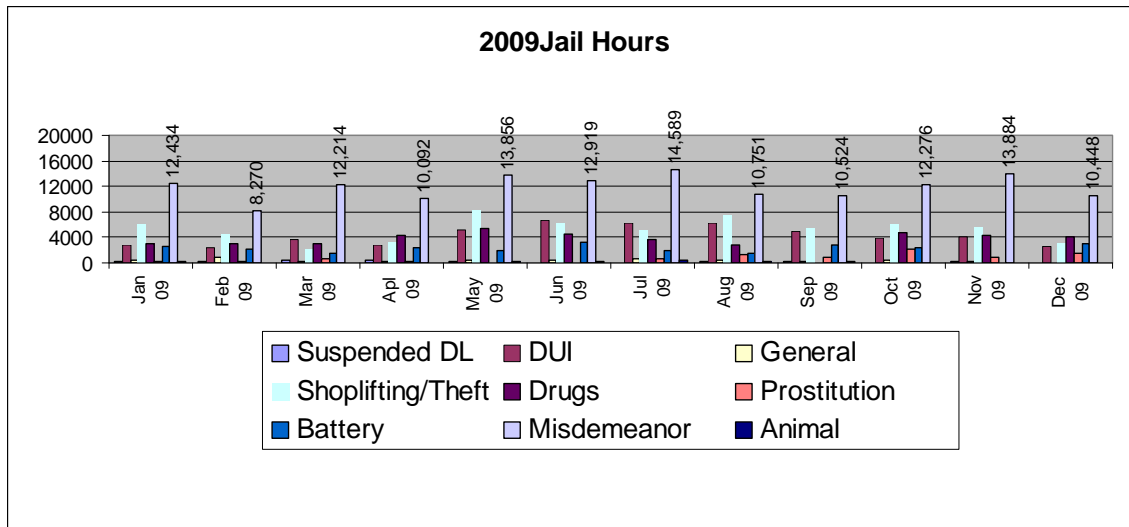
How much was the “jail bill”?

Anyone who is arrested on City charges, or is ordered to serve jail time at sentencing, serves their jail time at the Shawnee County Department of Corrections (SNDOD). Our Probation Division is responsible for reconciling the monthly SNDOD “Jail Bill” to ensure accurate billing and that credit for time served is applied to cases; the graph below illustrates the actual dollar amount billed to the City of Topeka by Shawnee County for housing City inmates.



What types of crimes resulted in a jail sentence?

All of the jail hours served are also tracked by type; the graph below illustrates the jail hours served for City cases by type in 2009.



Goals & Objectives for 2010:

- In our continuing effort to become a mostly paperless court in the future, we have in place processes and procedures for both the Clerk's Office and the Probation Division that will allow us to scan and link all the old Court documents that are currently being stored in storage rooms. Due to the enormous amount of paper files, this process will take a few years to complete.
- Continue the process of working with other departments to evaluate the technology that would allow tickets to be electronically produced thereby saving time and resources and ensuring accuracy by doing away with manual ticket entry.
- Introduce the City of Topeka's website for the public and other interested parties to access Municipal Court's public records.
- Install a public access terminal in the front lobby for visitors to the Court to be able to view Municipal Court's public records.
- Finalize the implementation of the FullCourt module that will allow offenders utilizing credit cards to make payments on the City of Topeka Website and the costs of those credit card payments will be passed on to the offenders.

Published February 18, 2010